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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/797,368	03/10/2004	Michael L. Bowen	03-324	4483
62753	7590	02/23/2007	EXAMINER	
VALERIE CALLOWAY			GRAY, LINDA LAMEY	
CHIEF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY COUNSEL			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
POLYMER GROUP, INC.				1734
9335 HARRIS CORNERS PARKWAY SUITE 300				
CHARLOTTE, NC 28269				

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
31 DAYS	02/23/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/797,368	BOWEN ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Linda L. Gray	1734	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 1-16-07
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                  2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) 1-22 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                     | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

Election/Restrictions

1. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species:

Group I: claims 12-15, drawn to the method of supplying including steps of preparing the roll in a dispenser,

Group II: claims 16-19, drawn to the method of supplying including steps of cutting and sealing, and

Group III: claim 22, drawn to a method of supplying including the step of wrapping a medical instrument.

2. Inventions I and II are directed to related methods of supplying. The related inventions are distinct if the (1) the inventions as claimed are either not capable of use together or can have a materially different design, mode of operation, function, or effect; (2) the inventions do not overlap in scope, i.e., are mutually exclusive; and (3) the inventions as claimed are not obvious variants. See MPEP § 806.05(j). In the instant case, the inventions as claimed are not capable of use together in view of the cutters in each invention and the table combination in parts of Invention I; have materially different designs in view of the dispenser/cutter in Invention I, table dispenser in Invention I also, and the cutter/sealer of Invention II; have different modes of operation in that the cutter/sealer in Invention II seals the wrap; and have different effects in that the cutter/sealer of Invention II produces a sealed cut wrap. Also, the inventions do not overlap in scope in that claims 12-15 do not seal as does occur in claims 16-19. Also, the inventions as claimed are not obvious variants. Furthermore, the inventions as claimed do not encompass overlapping subject matter and there is nothing of record to show them to be obvious variants.

Inventions II and III are directed to related methods of supplying. The related inventions are distinct if the (1) the inventions as claimed are either not capable of use together or can have a materially different design, mode of operation, function, or effect; (2) the inventions do not overlap in scope, i.e., are mutually exclusive; and (3) the inventions as claimed are not obvious variants. See MPEP § 806.05(j). In the instant case, the inventions as claimed have materially different designs in view of the cutter/sealer of Invention II; have different modes of operation in that the cutter/sealer in Invention II seals the wrap where Invention III wraps a surgical instrument; and have different effects in that the cutter/sealer of Invention II produces a sealed cut wrap where the invention in Invention III produces a wrapped surgical instrument. Also, the inventions do not overlap in scope in that claim 22 does not seal as does occur in claims 16-19. Also, the inventions as claimed are not obvious variants. Furthermore, the inventions as claimed do not encompass overlapping subject matter and there is nothing of record to show them to be obvious variants.

Inventions I and III are directed to related methods of supplying. The related inventions are distinct if the (1) the inventions as claimed are either not capable of use together or can have a materially different design, mode of operation, function, or effect; (2) the inventions do

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not overlap in scope, i.e., are mutually exclusive; and (3) the inventions as claimed are not obvious variants. See MPEP § 806.05(j). In the instant case, the inventions as claimed have materially different designs in view of the dispenser/cutter of Invention I, the table dispenser in Invention I also, and the wrapped surgical product from the method of the invention in Invention II; have different modes of operation in that the Invention III wraps a surgical instrument where Invention I provides a dispenser/cutter or table dispenser; and have different effects in that the invention in Invention III produces a wrapped surgical instrument. Also, the inventions do not overlap in scope in that claims 12-15 do not wrap as does occur in claim 22. Also, the inventions as claimed are not obvious variants. Furthermore, the inventions as claimed do not encompass overlapping subject matter and there is nothing of record to show them to be obvious variants.

3. Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, claims 11, 20, and 21 are generic.

4. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

5. The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

6. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

#### Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Linda L. Gray whose telephone number is (571) 272-1228. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Chris Fiorilla can be reached on (571) 272-1187. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

llg *elg*  
February 13, 2007

*Linda L. Gray*  
LINDA GRAY  
PRIMARY EXAMINER